



Everglades Boating Regulations

Navigable waters cover one third of the park, creating excellent fishing and boating opportunities. Please remember to exercise caution while boating in the Everglades. Here are some guidelines to follow:

- ✿ Carry all United States Coast Guard required items, including personal flotation devices, on board your boat.
- ✿ Always carry a nautical chart and compass as it is easy to become confused or lost while traveling through mangroves.
- ✿ Check weather and tide predictions before leaving shore and always be prepared for mosquitoes.

- ✿ Leave a float plan with family or friends.
- ✿ Please do not damage the sea bottom with your boat or outboard motor while enjoying park waters.
- ✿ Avoid propeller damage by using the channels to increase speed.
- ✿ Remember that collecting plants and animals in Everglades National Park is prohibited. This includes orchids, air plants, sea horses, starfish, conch, tropical fish, lobster, coral, sponges, and driftwood.
- ✿ One quart of non-occupied shells may be collected per person per day.

Boat Ramps

Boat ramps within Everglades National Park are located at Flamingo, Little Blackwater Sound, and West Lake.

Several commercial boat ramps are located in Everglades City and Chokoloskee.

Closed Areas

(Closed areas represent less than one percent of the total park area.)

In order to offer additional protection to wildlife habitat, the following areas are closed to the public:

Keys and Beaches of Florida Bay

With the exception of Carl Ross Key, Little Rabbit Key, North Nest Key, and Bradley Key (during daylight hours only) all keys and beaches in Florida Bay are closed to protect nesting and rookery areas. The waters immediately adjacent to Porjoe, Sandy Key, and the Tern Keys, as posted. The moats and internal creeks, as posted, associated with the Buchanan Keys. Wading within 100 feet of any closed shoreline is prohibited.

Northeast Florida Bay

Closed areas include Little Madeira Bay, Taylor River, East Creek, Mud Creek, Mud Bay, Davis Creek, Joe Bay and its easternmost portion, Snag Bay, and all creeks and bays inland from the northern shoreline of Long Sound to US 1.

Other Areas

Rodgers Bay Rookery; the small groups of islands at the southeast entrance to Gaskin Bay, known as Indian Key Rookery; and the Cuthbert Lakes and Rookery. Other areas may be posted by order of the Park Superintendent.

Motor Restrictions

Motors are **prohibited** in the following areas:

All freshwater lakes, including Paurotis and Nine Mile Ponds.

Canoe Trails: Bear Lake, Coot Bay Pond, Mud Lake, Nine Mile Pond, and Noble Hammock canoe trails; Hells Bay canoe trail from the trailhead to the mouth of the creek at Lard Can campsite; West Lake canoe trail from the southeast end of West Lake into Long Lake through to the mouth of Alligator Creek at Garfield Bight.

Coastal waters designated as wilderness: Mud, Bear, East Fox, Middle Fox, Little Fox, and Gator Lakes; Raulerson’s Marsh; Homestead Canal; all associated small lakes on Cape Sable inland from Lake Ingraham; Cuthbert, Henry, Little, Long, and the Lungs Lakes; all inland creeks and lakes north of Long Sound, Joe Bay, and Little Madeira Bay except those ponds and lakes associated with Taylor River.

Watercraft with engines of six horsepower or less are permitted on West Lake, but not beyond.

No Wake Zones and Boating Impacts

Propeller damage to seagrass beds is harmful to the marine environment. Be careful when navigating in shallow waters and use a push-pole or paddle when necessary. Operation of a vessel in excess of five m.p.h. is prohibited in:

Everglades City Area

Alligator Creek, Plate Creek, Halfway Creek, Gopher Key Creek where marked, and between Wilderness Waterway Markers 86 & 87.

Key Largo Area

Marker 42 Creek, the Boggies, Shell Creek, Nest Key, and McCormick Creek.

Flamingo Area

Both boat basins; Tarpon, Avocado, and North Prong Creeks; Buttonwood and East Cape Canals where marked; and the shoreline east of the marina as posted.

Water Skis and Personal Watercraft

The towing of persons by vessels utilizing water skis, hydra slides, knee boards, or other similar types of equipment is prohibited. The

operation of personal watercraft, also known as “Wet Bikes”, “Jet Skis”, and other trade names, is prohibited.